

laughter from some of those present, while the Christians trembled lest their unskilled champion should be turned to ridicule by his practised opponent. Their anxiety, however, was soon set at rest. "In the name of Jesus Christ, O philosopher, listen ! " Such was the old man's exordium, and the burden of his few unstudied words was to restate his "artless, unquestioning belief" * in the cardinal truths of Christianity. There was no argument. " If you believe/ he said, "tell me so." "I believe," said the philosopher, compelled, as he afterwards explained it, to become a Christian by some marvellous power. Such is the version of Sozomen; according to Socrates the old man said, " Christ and the apostles committed to us no dialectical art and no vain deception, but plain, bare doctrine, which is guarded by faith and good works." f When we consider the endless floods of dialectical subtlety which were poured out during and after the Council of Nicaea by those engaged in the Arian controversy, it seems rather biting irony that a pagan philosopher should have been thus easily and rapidly converted from darkness to light. It is certain, however, that many of the bishops collected at Nicaea belonged to the same class as this "simple old man," peasants who had had no theological training and owed their elevation—by the suffrages of their congregations—to the conspicuous uprightness of their lives. Such a one was Spyridion, of Cyprus, a shepherd in mind, speech, and dress, but

* *aitepispypyooS mtfrs'iojuer.*
f *yvfivrijv yvGOflTjY, rtiGTei noli na^oiS*
epyoiS lierijv.—Socrates, i., 8.